

**Wilmington Education Improvement Commission  
Parent, Educator, and Community Engagement Committee  
Meeting Minutes  
Bayard Middle School  
January 9, 2017  
5:30 pm – 7 pm**

**Chair Tizzy Lockman called the meeting to order at 5:41 pm.**

The committee did not meet quorum and were therefore unable to approve minutes from the December meeting with the Meeting the Needs of Students in Poverty Committee.

T. Lockman began the meeting noting that instead of breaking out into subgroups that the committee will have a conversation as a whole to talk about the direction of each subgroup. After reviewing who is on each subcommittee, she dove into a general overview of each subcommittee.

T. Lockman noted that the research committee would be responsible for digging into the research that has already been done and discussed by the committee on national best practices, definitions, and barriers to parent, educator, and community engagement. The outreach committee will be responsible for helping craft and deliver the political efficacy survey to Wilmington parents and community members in addition to helping the community become more involved with the committee. All committee members can help with the work but for planning purposes it was important to break up into subcommittees.

**Chair and Commission Update**

T. Lockman reviewed the handouts that included the Commission's memorandum to Governor-Elect Carney's Transition Team and the Commission's presentation to the Delaware State Board of Education. T. Lockman first recapped the Commission meeting in December. This meeting, in its entirety, focused on reviewing Governor-Elect Carney's education platform and having discussion about the feedback that should be provided from the Commission. The Commission went through the platform point by point and condensed the feedback into a memorandum. The feedback aligns with the Commission's action agenda. This memorandum was sent to Governor Carney's transition team.

It was mentioned that the Commission's next meeting is tentatively January 24<sup>th</sup> and the February 28<sup>th</sup> Commission meeting will include a presentation on the fiscal impact analysis.

The committee then reviewed the Commission's presentation to the State Board of Education. It was mentioned that during the presentation, the work of each of the Commission's committees was highlighted. T. Lockman noted that it was a status update on the work of the Commission. It was noted that the tables included in the presentation can be seen in the Annual Report and the Status Report documents released in December by the Commission.

## **Subcommittee Discussion**

The committee then moved into a discussion on the goals, priorities, and deliverables of each of the subcommittees. The subcommittees will work via telephone and virtually to accomplish tasks in between meetings.

### ***Research Subcommittee***

#### ***Deliverable(s) and Goals***

- The subcommittee should create a working definition of *successful* engagement.
- By the end of the year, the subcommittee will create a document that shows best practices of engagement.
- There should be an understanding of resources, in Delaware, that can be used to implement some of the best practices and strategies as highlighted in the research.

#### ***Action Items***

- The committee should complete readings and have discussion to interpret what successful parent engagement looks like and how it can best be applied within the Delaware context. This would include demonstrating what best practices would look like in Delaware schools, specifically in Wilmington.
- The committee should research and define engaged communities and parents.
  - o The committee decided that it is important to keep in mind that trying to get to one definition is difficult because the definitions are community specific.
  - o It was emphasized that the subcommittee should identify commonalities between successful programs in order to craft a working definition.
- The committee will use the guidelines of the Commission in terms of student outcomes and definitions of student success to shape their work.

#### ***Discussion***

The committee reflected on the national best practices research that had already been done. The documents shared with committee members at the beginning of the school year included information based on research questions developed during the 2015-16 school year by the committee. The committee emphasized the usefulness of these documents in getting the research subcommittee started and in crafting the final deliverable this year. The committee agreed that the next step is to look at practices from specific cities that would respond to the needs in Delaware and Wilmington.

It was also emphasized that the research subcommittee will need to focus efforts on local practices of engagement. This would include looking to the experts in engagement and at what school districts and charters are doing on parent and community engagement. Additionally, it would be important to understand what has been attempted by districts and charters even if the practice was unsuccessful. It was mentioned that there have been presentations at School Board meetings on parent engagement and other useful information that would be useful for this committee. The subcommittee discussed reaching out to LEAs on what has been attempted in regards to engagement.

The committee discussed the possibility of using data to understand what local schools have done to improve parent and community engagement. It was mentioned that one requirement of

priority schools is to increase their efforts in parent engagement and how those efforts help to improve a school overall, which would be useful data for the committee. The committee discussed school improvement plans within the context of engagement and the information that could potentially be useful to the work of the committee.

### *Timeline*

It was suggested that the subcommittee start assigning deadlines to action items. Kelsey Mensch, University of Delaware's Institute for Public Administration, compared the memo recently completed by the Charter District Collaboration committee to the deliverable of this subcommittee. Using the timeline that guided the Charter District memorandum, she mentioned that using each of the meetings as deadlines to accomplish a 2-4-page research memorandum could be useful. The committee decided that the deliverable would be shared with the Commission in June. T. Lockman suggested that each of the subcommittees have a call to discuss the process and delegate the appropriate tasks.

### ***Outreach Subcommittee***

#### *Goals and Priorities*

- The parent voice must be heard throughout this process in order to understand their perspective on education in Delaware. The subcommittee should have conversations with parents and community members in order to understand what parents and community members think that successful engagement looks like.
- The subcommittee wants to ensure that the focus is on the three categories of the committee's name: parents, educators, and communities. It was discussed that the outreach subcommittee needs to ask questions to all three groups and then identify the commonality between each of the groups.
- The committee discussed that the subcommittee should create an understanding of outreach in order to reach out to families and community members at the district and school level. The committee discussed the importance of understanding the levels of engagement in their outreach strategies. The need to mobilize all stakeholders to help break down the silos was also emphasized.

#### *Deliverable(s)*

The subcommittee will work in partnership with Lauren Bailes, University of Delaware, to craft an engagement survey to distribute to Wilmington parents. The survey's purpose is to understand the perceptions of schools as policy structures and organizations that may be obstructive to participation and engagement.

L. Bailes provided a brief update on the status of the survey. She mentioned that the University of Delaware's Partnership for Public Education has agreed to fund the project. The next step requires the subcommittee to work with L. Bailes to assemble the survey questions. She mentioned the importance of keeping the questions manageable. The survey should be no longer than one-page front and back. The survey will be in a scantron format to make filling it out easier. The subcommittee will be needed to help spread the survey out to parents once it is completed. The My Very Own Library events will be very useful for survey distribution as it allows the outreach subcommittee to interact face-to-face with parents and community members.

The survey can also be distributed online so parents can complete it on their smartphones and devices.

She also mentioned that a point of discussion should be additional points to include in the survey. She also suggested using information from the Chicago Consortium to adapt certain survey questions on perception of engagement and educator awareness in the community.

#### *Timeline*

L. Bailes noted that the survey proposal should be finalized by end of January. Once it has been finalized and approved, the subcommittee will start in 6-8 weeks to collect data depending on the IRB approval process. Early findings of the survey can be presented in June, including where the subcommittee outreached and how many people were reached. The subcommittee will need to plan what communities to reach out to. It was also mentioned that to incentivize people to participate in the survey, there will be drawings for Amazon gift cards.

#### **Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

**The meeting concluded at 7:08 pm.**

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Committee Meeting  
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**Committee Members**

Tizzy Lockman, Chair  
Pati Nash  
Meredith Griffin  
Ted Boyer  
Kevin Dolan

**Members of Public**

Lauren Bailes

**IPA Support Staff Members**

Kelsey Mensch

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